

**Sayers, Margery**

---

**From:** joel hurewitz <joelhurewitz@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 02, 2018 10:59 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** CR8-2018 A Resolution proposing to amend County Charter Section 209

Dear Councilmembers,

I am disappointed that there are no amendments for CR8 to add clarifying language to the County Charter resolution that a legislative session may continue past midnight. In contrast, the Council spent a considerable amount of time at your last Work Session discussing the need for clarifying language to clear up any ambiguities of whether the public safety personnel worked "in" or "for" the County, whether sheriff's deputies are treated as employees of the County, and whether volunteer firefighters worked for their volunteer company or were employees because they worked under the supervision of the Fire Chief. Because of the difficulty of amending the Charter, it is even more imperative than crafting a relatively easy amendable property tax credit program that the Charter language be as clear and unambiguous as possible.

While the resolution implies that the deadline extends to the end of the legislative session running past midnight, there is no clear language which states this. The life of a bill is measured in calendar days, so it is not necessarily intuitive to any future reader that there is an additional day in addition to the extensions for weekends, holidays, weather and other unforeseen circumstances. In the absence of clear and unambiguous language, people will read the computation of time provisions in the Code or the more mercurial Council Rules which currently states that a legislative session may last for 24 hours and be adjourned from time to time. Neither of these alternative sources is proper or conclusive to interpret the Charter.

In addition, I am not in favor of deleting the "other unforeseen circumstance" provision as proposed by Councilperson Terrasa. I feel that this clause ensures coverage of all scenarios which may not necessarily be "emergency conditions" including but not limited to disease epidemic, national disaster and mourning (such as a terrorist attack, war, or death of president) or building issues such as fire damage, plumbing leak, or power outage.

Sincerely,

Joel Hurewitz  
Columbia, MD